NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE bulletin

Vol. 48/No. 1

September/October 2004

Things To Do

- [x] Attend refresher sessions on medical issues
- [ ] Review Handbook with class
- [ ] Prepare and coordinate timetable
- [ ] Photocopy activity sheets
- [x] Attend staff meeting
- [ ] Get media equipment out of storage
- [ ] Review data files
- [ ] Check students medical information
- [ ] Set up meetings with parents
- [ ] Register textbooks
- [x] Get more chalk, pens, etc.
- [ ] Make and put up bulletin boards

Always be Prepared

by LESLEY-ANN BROWNE

The love of reading was instilled in me at a very early age. Over the summers when I was a child my mom would bring books home to me almost every day from a library near her work. I would spend my time on a blanket eating peanut butter and jam sandwiches and reading. I also had a favorite place sitting in a tree in my parent's front yard. I look at that tree now and the small branches and wonder how I managed.

My collection of books is rather eclectic. I still have my childhood books like *The Bobbsey Twins*, *Nancy Drew* and *The Hardy Boys*. Actually these childhood books were shared with my two sisters and my brother, but I managed to get them out of the house first. I still have everything from my university days as I could not bear to part with copies of books of even the most bizarre subject areas. I now have novels, and books signed by the authors, and some that I have not yet had the chance to read. My copies of Shakespeare, Kropotkin, Plato, and Rushdie, are intermixed on shelves with local authors, fiction, and numerous books of interest.

My most recent acquisition is one that I will read but never expected to add to my collection. It is titled *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Parenting a Teenager*. I selected it from among the wide array of books on the topic for a number of reasons. First, the title caught my eye, and the author wrote the book from a parent's perspective.

There are still a few months before my daughter is officially a teenager but I like to be prepared. I never made it to boy scouts but they would be very proud. I am the maker of lists who prepares for all events, sets time lines, and must accomplish what I set out to do.

So I started reading about how to raise a teenager, how to set guidelines and give appropriate levels of freedom. Needless to say, my search for assistance has now intimidated me and I have shelved the book. It sits nicely between *Dr. Spock's Book of Child Care* and my copy of *Those Preschool Years*. It will remain there until I garner the courage to take another look.

I find I am looking at my daughter, now a young woman, with a new understanding of what she – and we – have to face during the teen years. I have yet to ask my parents if they felt the same, but by the time they got to me they had practiced on two others. I could be bold enough to state that "practice makes perfect" but that might inflict the wrath of my two older siblings!

So this year my "baby" heads to Grade 8. I will again watch with wonderment and awe as our teachers manage to keep their wits about them day after day and know exactly how to deal with kids from Kindergarten to the end of high school. How teachers keep their humor, youthfulness, sense of purpose and strength, continues to amaze me. Perhaps my next acquisition should be a book on that topic. Have a wonderful school year!

THE bulletin

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VOLUNTEER OVERSEAS WITH CTF!

Would you like to assist teachers in a developing country? Are you interested in learning more about global education issues? Can you see yourself volunteering in Africa, Asia, or the Caribbean?

If yes, Project Overseas (PO) might be for you!

Each year about 50 Canadian teachers are chosen to volunteer on CTF's Project Overseas. On PO, Canadian teachers give their time and talent to offer professional development in-service programs in partnership with teacher organizations in developing countries. Based on requests from CTF's partners overseas, teams of Canadian teachers are formed in January and in-service projects take place in July and August.

CTF needs English and French-speaking Canadian teachers at the primary, elementary, and secondary levels who are interested in volunteering to offer in-services in a wide range of subjects in countries throughout Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.

Application criteria include:

- membership in a provincial or territorial teacher organization which sponsors PO and is a member of CTF;
- an appropriate teacher's certificate;
- at least five years teaching experience in Canada;
- Canadian citizenship;
- excellent health.

PO is a volunteer experience. Administrative, travel and living expenses are borne by CTF, provincial and territorial teachers' organizations (which are CTF members), CIDA, and the Wild Rose Foundation. No salaries or honoraria are paid to participants in PO and the sponsors do not cover costs associated with substitute teachers or release time.

TO APPLY:

Further information and application forms are available from:
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 (toll free in province)
Fax: 726-4302 or 1-877-711-6582 (toll free in province)

Deadline date for applications: **November 7, 2004**

CTF'S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS – TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

CARMANVILLE

"B" is for Bully

During the 2003-04 school year, Carmanville School Complex was involved in a unique project which promoted safe and caring schools. The school applied for a $1,500 grant from the Safe and Caring Schools Project Fund. The project was a collaboration of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, the Department of Education, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils. Funding was provided by the Government of Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy.

The school used the grant to produce a play entitled "B is for Bully", written by Alan Gotlieb, with music by Alice Brass. The play integrated music, drama and visual arts in an attempt to increase awareness to students and the public about bullying. The story began with two Grade 6 students discussing a bullying problem that exists in their school. They were unaware that the school supplies in their desk were experiencing a similar problem.

The cast of "B is for Bully" from Carmanville School Complex.

Four major themes ran through the play: self-esteem, peer pressure, assertiveness/aggression and conflict resolution. Students attending experienced the problems and feelings associated with bullying and were exposed to possible solutions.

Many students and staff members of the school had been involved in preparation for the production since February. Students from Grades 4 through 8 were involved in the choir and had active roles in the play. Teachers and parents had been involved in the design and production of many unique costumes as well as the stage set. The play was directed by Theater Arts teacher, Mr. Bob Kelly and music was coordinated by Music teacher, Ms. Karen Murray.

In addition to performing the play within the school for Grades K-9, there was also a public performance on Friday, May 28. The students had planned on taking the play on the road and performing at various schools throughout the School District in the coming weeks. Tragically, that same evening, the senior high section of the school, including the Mini Theater, was destroyed by fire. With the loss of the school, as well as all of the costumes and the stage set, this was no longer possible.

All of the students and teachers involved are to be commended for a job well done!

ST. JOHN'S

CBC goes back to school at Macdonald Drive Junior High

CBC's popular *Morning Show* was broadcast live from Macdonald Drive Junior High (MDJH) in St. John's on September 8, 2004. As students poured into the building, they were greeted with the CBC crew whose plan was to provide their listening audience with an overview of the first day of school.

Principal Keith Coombs and teacher Chesley West were interviewed by CBC personality Mr. Jeff Gilhooly. Local entertainer, Mr. Shawn Panting, sang a humorous song about the first day at school.

MDJH students, John Follett and Emily Jamieson, stepped up to the mike to discuss their experiences at the school. In fact, Emily had been interviewed last year as she began Grade 7. Additional perspectives of "the first day" were offered by Ms. Cindy Styles, one of the school's secretaries and by Mr. Sam Kelly, the school's custodian. Ms. Chantelle MacDonald Newhook ably lamented parents' stresses related to opening day.

As the show moved along, CoCo Leung, a 12-year-old Grade 9 talented musician, was interviewed. CoCo was last year's participant for strings in the St. John's Kiwanis Junior Rose Bowl and winner of the Newfoundland Registered Music Teacher Association Award. CoCo impressed her audience with her well-spoken manner and her piano skills as she played *Liebestraume No. 3 in A flat major* by Lizst.

The staff and students wish to thank CBC for their interest in broadcasting from Macdonald Drive Junior High. From all accounts, MDJH's listening audience enjoyed the program!

MDJH student, Coco Leung, entertains CBC listeners with her award-winning piano skills.

School honoured by national magazine

Over the summer, Brother Rice Junior High School in St. John's was chosen by *Today's Parent* magazine (September 2004 issue) as one of the top 40 high schools in the country. Brother Rice was honoured in the category of Extraordinary Extracurriculars. The article mentioned the 18 school teams, three bands, two choirs and the orchestra, but it was the Living Lab that took center stage. The article featured a beautiful full-page photograph of some of the students with their teacher, Sharon Martin, in the Living Lab. The Living Lab had a very successful first year, complete with a variety of fish, mammals, birds, plants, and even incubated eggs which hatched into nearly three dozen chicks right before the students' eyes. The students take an active part in the care of the lab's occupants – from growing the lettuce to feeding the rabbit, to gently misting the hermit crab. Nicole Bishop, a teacher at Brother Rice, says the Living Lab has played a large part in the academic life of all the students and has been instrumental in keeping "at risk" students interested in school.

This current school year has gotten off to a fabulous start at Brother Rice. The Living Lab is already back up and running, the recycling program is in full swing, and the Brother Rice Angels of Hope have already made a significant contribution to the community. The Angels of Hope – a team of teachers and students – participated in the Relay for Life sponsored by the Cancer Society. The team raised approximately $600 in just over 24 hours. "While it was a very wet and windy night, the team's spirits were not dampened," says Ms. Bishop. "The Angels of Hope have several other campaigns planned for the year as positive civic involvement continues to be encouraged and demonstrated by the Brother Rice community."

NLTA President elected to Canadian Teachers' Federation

NLTA President Fred Douglas was elected Vice President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation at the CTF Annual General Meeting held in Ottawa on July 11. He joins other teacher leaders from across the country as part of the CTF Executive Committee.

Mr. Douglas will work with his colleagues at the national level to continue to pursue the goals of CTF including the priorities established for 2004-05. These priorities include developing a model of accountability based on shared responsibility and professional autonomy; developing and implementing a plan which both promotes a fully funded education system and opposes privatization and commercialization in public education; developing an initiative which promotes an inclusive model of public education; and developing and implementing a plan to ensure a viable, sustainable CTF.

CTF's leadership team consists of President Terry Price, President-Designate Winston Carter, and Vice-Presidents Roger Regimbal, Wayne Clements, Larry Boor, and Fred Douglas. Mr. Douglas assumed his duties as CTF Vice President in July and will continue in his role as President of the NLTA until July 31, 2005.

NLTA President Fred Douglas

NLTA Medal winner announced

Krista Riche of St. John's has been awarded the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Medal for the 2004 Spring Convocation. Krista convocated this past May with a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) from Memorial University of Newfoundland. Krista also has a Bachelor of Arts with a major in English Language and Literature. She completed her teaching internship at Bishop Field Elementary in St. John's and was substituting with the Avalon East School District for the last school term.

Krista Riche

While at Memorial, Krista was the elected education representative on the Students Union (2003-04) which involved holding positions on various senate and committees within the Faculty as well as the University. From 2002-03 she was elected Treasurer on the Executive of the MUN Education Society and has served on various committees such as Women's Issues Committee (MUNSU); Health Plan Appeals Committee (MUNSU); Admissions Committee, Faculty of Education; Appeals Committee, Faculty of Education; and the Literacy Committee, Bishop Field Elementary.

NLTA Memorial University Scholarship awarded

Jillian Murphy

Jillian Murphy of St. John's has been named 2003-04 recipient of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Scholarship. Jillian convocated in May 2004 with a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary). She began substituting with the Avalon East School District in January 2004.

Throughout her university career, Jillian has been active as a volunteer, teaching learning disabilities students and continues to volunteer at two primary/elementary schools assisting teachers of various grades. She has pursued various avenues of professional development including the Substitute Teachers' Special Interest Council Conference, the Write Away 2000 Informational Session, Strategies for Success – Teaching and Learning in the K-12 Classroom, as well as others. She completed her internship at Rennies' River Elementary in St. John's.

The NLTA Memorial University Scholarship is awarded annually on the basis of academic excellence and character to a senior student enrolled in the Faculty of Education. The scholarship, valued at $750, is awarded annually by the MUN Senate Committee on Scholarships, acting on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Computers for Schools seeking teacher feedback

In an effort to create momentum for future growth, Computers for Schools (CFS) is calling on Newfoundland and Labrador technology teachers to submit feedback on the organization. CFS would especially be interested in knowing the successes your school has experienced in using computers provided through the organization. If your class has been working on a particularly inventive project, please send a written description, including the number of computers received through CFS, an outline of the project, and the project's anticipated or actual results. CFS hopes to publish some of these stories on its website at www.computersforschoolsnl.ca. Please send your submissions no later than October 31, 2004 to: Vanessa George, Program Administrator, Computers for Schools, c/o Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association, Suite 1A – 33 Pippy Place, St. John's, NL, A1B 3X2; Fax: (709) 722-8214 ; E-mail: cfs@nfld.net. For more information, contact Vanessa at (709) 576-2377.

Winners announced in NLTA Senior Math League Provincial Finals

Congratulations to all those who participated in the 17th annual NLTA Senior Mathematics League Provincial Finals game held Saturday, April 24, 2004 at Memorial University.

Ten teams, totalling 40 of the province's best Mathematics problem solvers from nearly every school district, spent a half day together at Memorial University participating in the Provincial Finals game. They were joined by teachers, parents, Mathematics professors, and invited guests as they tried their hand at solving 10 challenging problems and even a four-problem relay question. Several students happily demonstrated how they arrived at their answers and often surprised even the Memorial University problem setters with their ingenuity!

"We are proud of this high quality effort which is a partnership of NLTA through its Math/Science Special Interest Council, Memorial University through its Department of Mathematics and Statistics, and the Department of Education," says Provincial Coordinator, Paul Gosse. "But the commitment of those groups can only apply to a result of the love of teaching and learning Mathematics of two dedicated Mathematics professors, Dr. Bruce Shawyer and Dr. Peter Booth, that produce the league. These two people have continued to reach out to help develop Mathematical talent in students outside university at many levels over nearly 20 years."

Congratulations to all those who participated in the league and in the Provincial Finals, and to this year's winners: First Place – Ascension Collegiate, Bay Roberts; Second Place – Bishops College, St. John's; and Third Place – Coaker Academy, Virgin Arm. While congratulating the winners, special thanks go out to the problem setters, the organizers, and especially the local coordinators and teacher-sponsors

who support and encourage students to participate fully in school life.

For further information on the NLTA Senior Mathematics League, visit www.math.mun.ca and click "Outreach", or email Provincial Coordinator, Paul Gosse, at paulgosse@gov.nl.ca.

First Place winners from Ascension Collegiate: Presenter: Dr. Bruce Shawyer (left) and Teacher-sponsor: Mr. Doug Parsons.

Kids Eat Smart-supported nutrition programs bring the community to school

Kids Eat Smart Foundation Newfoundland and Labrador works with 150 communities to support nutrition programs that nourish approximately 17,000 children. While schools are the most accessible delivery site for programs – it's where the children are – the Foundation advocates a community-based model that brings the community into the schools to run the nutrition programs, rather than nutrition programs being an added responsibility on educators.

Kids Eat Smart Foundation has a start-up application process that is designed to include parents, the School Council, Community Health, representatives from the Strategic Social Plan, dietitians, community groups, service clubs, and others.

Executive Director Susan Green explains, "Before the Foundation supports a program, we give a presentation to the community. While the co-operation and support from the school is essential to a successful program, Kids Eat Smart Clubs are most effective when they are community supported. The focus is on better health and better education."

Donald C. Jamieson Academy in Burin has a Kids Eat Smart Club. Known as the Jamieson Breakfast Club, the program is run by a community-wide team of volunteers and co-ordinated by retired Vice Principal Ross Tilley. Tilley say, "We have more volunteers than we can use. Each week a different group comes in – retired teachers, the people from the bank, the College of the North Atlantic, Booth Shriners, church groups. The community offers tremendous support to the Breakfast Club in volunteers, financial support, and in donations. It's something people want to support and be a part of."

The program was started five years ago by Ross's wife, Ruby Whiffen Tilley, school secretary and a member of the NAPE Executive. A few years previous, Whiffen Tilley had been part of the team that raised funds for what would become Kids Eat Smart Foundation. Whiffen Tilley explains that laying good groundwork for the program was essential, and that now the students, the school and the community are realizing the benefits, which range from fewer complaints of stomachaches, to fewer classroom disruptions, to improved concentration. She says, "As school secretary I used to see two or three children in the office every day complaining of a stomachache. They were hungry, and it was interfering with their school day. With the Breakfast program, that is no longer the case. The program makes a huge difference, it brings the community into the school, and it improves the surroundings for everyone."

Volunteers from the community who operate the breakfast program at Donald C. Jamieson Academy get a special parking spot at the school.

MATHIEU DA COSTA CHALLENGE

What you can win

Each winner, accompanied by a parent/guardian, will win a trip to Ottawa, with transportation, hotel and meals included, attend the Awards Ceremony and a cultural evening in Ottawa in February 2005, receive a Certificate of Achievement and prizes.

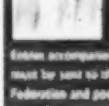
What do you have to do?

Tell the stories or illustrate the achievements of people whose work has not been well recognized or celebrated in the history of Canada. Show how specific individuals from Canada's Aboriginal, African and other ethnocultural origins have contributed to the building and development of Canada.

2004-2005 Mathieu Da Costa Challenge

The categories

One winner from each age group (9-11, 12-14 and 15-18)
Best Essay or Short story in English / Best Essay or Short Story in French
Best Artistic Representation



Deadline
December 10, 2004

Entries accompanied by the Consent Form must be sent to the Canadian Teachers' Federation and postmarked no later than December 10, 2004.

or visit our Web site at www.ctf-fce.ca

Canadian Heritage Patrimoine canadien
Multiculturalism Multiculturalisme

Canada

J. Christopher Dennis

J. CHRISTOPHER DENNIS, 1951 – 2004

Although he spent approximately 25 years teaching, Christopher's greatest love, besides his family, was learning. His goal in life was to learn something about everything. Throughout this insatiable quest for knowledge, Christopher retained every single tidbit of knowledge, trivia, etc. and delighted in sharing it with others. This was but one quality that made him a great educator. The other was his love of people of all ages and his ability to treat them all with fairness and respect, a quality that made him a great human being.

"Mr. D" was well known and loved in the Cormack/Deer Lake area. He started his career as a substitute teacher with the Deer Lake Integrated School Board in 1976, highlighted his career as teaching principal of C.L. Sheppard School in Cormack for 16 years and concluded with medical retirement from Deer Lake Elementary in June 2003.

Over the years Christopher was actively involved in numerous District level committees, at the Branch level of the NLTA and the provincial level of SAC. However, his many contributions are small in comparison to the really memorable things that he so enjoyed doing with his students. These involved everything from fish 'n brewis on the rock in Great Harbour Deep to sitting in the House of Assembly while it was in session.

Christopher was the type of person that Maslow had in mind when he put that pinpoint atop his pyramid. His greatest testimony to this was how he dealt with ALS. He never got mad, he never got sad; he had no regrets; he had no fears; he thought ordinary thoughts; he maintained his sense of humour and love of simple pleasures; and he smiled with the last iota of muscle left in his body.

Christopher truly touched many lives during his 53 years, but none more than those of his soul mate and friend, wife Wanda and his children of whom he was so proud, James, Liam, (Bianca) and Amanda.

If Christopher were to leave a legacy, it would simply be this… Be a Good Person.

(Submitted by his best friend, Wanda Gushue)

Catherine Mary Edwards-Way

CATHERINE MARY EDWARDS-WAY, 1961 – 2004

In January 2004 the staff and students of St. Joseph's Academy in Lamaline were very saddened to hear that Ms. Way had lost her courageous battle with cancer.

Cathy was born in St. Lawrence on April 18, 1961, and after graduating from high school she attended Memorial University where she received her B.A. (Ed.). Her teaching career began in 1985 at St. George's School in English Harbour East. In 1987 she moved to St. Joseph's Academy in Lamaline, and in 1989 to Marion Elementary in St. Lawrence. Cathy taught at Allurit School in Nanisivik, Northwest Territories in 1990, and in 1991 she returned to Marion Elementary in St. Lawrence. In 1995 she returned to St. Joseph's Academy in Lamaline.

Cathy loved what she did. Her passion for children was evident in all the innovative things she did both in her classroom and around the school.

Cathy is mourned by her husband Ron; her three children: Maggie, Liam and Amelie; her brothers and sisters: Brian, Ian, Fred, Rosalie and Dorothy; as well as her many friends and colleagues.

Cathy's lust for life and her love of teaching young children will be greatly missed.

(Submitted by Eric Ayers, St. Joseph's Academy, Lamaline)

Neta O'Toole

NETA O'TOOLE, 1952 – 2004

On June 22, Neta O'Toole from Pasadena passed away after a long battle with cancer. Neta was born in Bishop's Falls on June 8, 1952, to Len and Marion Hannon. She was the sixth child of a family of ten. She completed high school in Grand Falls and went on to St. Bride's College, Littledale, to begin her education to become a teacher.

While teaching in Buchans, she met Jim and they were married on July 3, 1976. He was the love of her life and her rock to the very end. Her children, Jeannie and Jimmy arrived to complete their family. She was a devoted mother, always there to support their endeavours and to encourage them to go on to better things. Jeannie and her husband Scott made Neta a grandmother in 2000 with the arrival of Jared and then Lucas. Her grandchildren were her greatest joy in recent years. Neta's teaching career spanned 33 years and she touched the lives of many children during that time, just as they touched her life. She thoroughly enjoyed her job, right up to her last teaching assignment with the Kindergarten class of Pasadena Elementary in the spring of 2003.

When Neta was first diagnosed with cancer in 1994, she began her fight with a positive attitude and unwavering faith. These she maintained throughout her illness to the very end. Neta will always be remembered for her warm smile and genuine interest for the people in her life. She will be sadly missed and always remembered in the hearts of her family, friends, colleagues and students.

(Submitted by Thomas Sheppard, St. Catherine's Academy)

GORDON E. RICHARDS, 1947 – 2003

On April 9, 2003 Macpherson Junior High School in St. John's lost a true and valued teacher. Gordon E. Richards was born in Port aux Basques in 1947 to Gordon and Selina Richards. He was educated in Port aux Basques before studying education at Memorial University. He began his teaching career at Port aux Basques where he taught for two years and spent the following 28 years at Macpherson as a teacher of Social Studies, Mathematics, Language, Art and Industrial Arts. Eventually Gord became Social Studies department head and in the years before his retirement he served as vice-principal. Gord was also a life member of the NLTA Social Studies Special Interest Council.

Those of us who worked with Gord need not question the term "master teacher". No challenge was too great and situations which most would avoid or dread were embraced by Gord. His ability to analyse and solve problems was legendary. Gord was a sounding board for staff members and as vice-principal his door was always open. He was a teacher who gloried in a job well done and was always a true mentor to students as well as a number of student interns who were fortunate enough to experience life in his classroom.

Gord's excellence in carpentry bailed us out of many a problem and a number of sheds, garages and patio decks remain in his memory. He served as a long time member of the Portugal Cove Lions Club. He exasperated his fishing buddies by out catching them all using minimal equipment. He was a noted chef who could make an artwork of bologna and beans over an open fire. All of us who knew him have our "Gord Stories" for he was, in the true sense of the Newfoundland dialect that he loved, a "character".

Gord retired in 1997 to build a woodworking shop. Unfortunately his retirement was short-lived and Gord was diagnosed with and eventually succumbed to cancer. He will, however, live on in the memories of the many friends and students whose lives he touched along the way.

Our deepest sympathies are extended to his wife Bea and daughters Karen, Lisa and Ashley.

(Submitted by the staff of Macpherson Junior High School)

MILLY (IMELDA) YOUNG (NEE GREENE), 1920 – 2004

In 1938 Milly left her home in Point Verde, Placentia to attend St. Bride's College, Littledale where she completed Grade 12 and her first year university. She began her teaching career at Mundy Pond where many of her colleagues would become some of her life long friends. She then went on to teach in South East, Placentia.

Milly stopped teaching in 1947 to marry and raise a family, but ten years later she returned to her chosen profession at St. Edward's School in Placentia where she taught and acted in an administrative capacity until her retirement in 1981. During these years she also completed her B.A. (Ed.).

Milly's career, and indeed her entire life, were examples of excellence, caring and dedication. She brought to her profession her love of literature, a keen sense of humour, a talent for writing poetry, and her abilities as a storyteller. Milly's advice was highly sought and valued by colleagues, students and family. She had a special concern, which she showed in many ways, for the less fortunate in society. A loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt and friend, Milly embodied the finest qualities of a true teacher. She is missed by many and fondly remembered.

To her daughter and son-in-law, Edwina and Bob Craig, and treasured grandchildren, Andrea, Kathryn and Robert, and all her family, especially her nieces and nephews who followed her in the field of education throughout the world, sincere sympathy is extended.

Those who instruct others will shine like stars for all eternity. — Old Testament

(Submitted by Elizabeth Browne)

Pertinent Issues

by FRED DOUGLAS

It seems hardly possible for a year to have passed since I assumed the office of NLTA President. I cannot, during the whole of my teaching career, remember a year passing so quickly. Some suggest that this is merely a symptom of aging, but I rather suspect it has more to do with the demands of the office and being as actively engaged as time and energy will allow – a lot like teaching in that regard!

I will not review all the events of the last school year, but certainly there are several issues that have implications for our ongoing work on your behalf. One of the most pertinent issues is our insistence that teachers will not do the work of another bargaining unit as occurred during the NAPE/CUPE job action last school year. Despite bringing a policy grievance on this issue in 2001, NLSBA has still not proceeded to arbitration on the matter. Following the support staff strike there was some indication that both parties to the dispute might meet to again attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution outside the arbitration process, but nothing further has occurred to date. I feel strongly that if such a resolution cannot be found in the short term then an arbitration board must be asked to provide a ruling on the dispute. Whatever the outcome of such a ruling, administrators and teachers will have a specific set of guidelines to follow during any future job action by Student Assistants.

The effects surrounding the loss of 256 teachers during the provincial budgetary process and 19 Program Specialists through School Board restructuring have yet to be fully felt. There is no question that there will be an immediate impact on class size, program offerings, etc., but the long term effect of reduced support to classroom teachers and administrators and the inevitable downloading of workload to schools is worrisome as well. The wholesale paralleling of declining student enrolment with teacher allocations is, in my opinion, a disastrous, oversimplified managerial approach to our demographic challenges that has already met the threshold of diminishing returns.

Change and challenge, like the above, are perennial. We may not always agree with the process or the outcomes but they do keep us focused and engaged. And while we do not always achieve the results we would wish for, we must consider how much less we may have liked a particular outcome had we not been actively engaged in attempting to influence the process. To that end we have met with the Minister of Education and his officials and had a lengthy discussion around Dr. Dibbon's report, *It's About Time: A Study of the Impact of Workload on Teachers and Students*. We do appreciate the opportunity to dialogue about workload issues outside of the formal bargaining process and feel that this can only be a positive step in terms of briefing the Minister and department officials on the points raised by Dr. Dibbon.

A number of members have contacted the NLTA office to inquire about the status of negotiations. The NLTA's position remains the same as that communicated to you in the spring in this regard. We have no intention of pursuing the process of collective bargaining talks with the employer at this time. We feel that the current climate/circumstance is not conducive to productive bargaining and would be unlikely to result in achieving gains in many of the areas submitted by you and subsequently incorporated into our "Opening Package". We will continue to assess the situation and will certainly report to the membership immediately should there be any change as a result of an Executive decision and/or a request by the employer to exchange proposals.

Internally we have two important upcoming events: the province-wide vote for president and vice-president on February 8 and our Biennial General Meeting (BGM), March 29-31. I would encourage each and every member to read the campaign literature and make an effort to chat with any of the candidates who contact you or visit your school or office. The people elected to these two offices will be the senior leadership of our union for 2003-07 and will play an important role in advancing our issues both internally and externally. It is my hope that every member will become engaged in the process of choosing our leaders. I would also encourage as many members as possible to become involved at the branch level and to offer themselves as delegates to BGM. This is the Parliament of our Association and it is where we pass policy which shapes our growth

and direction for the next two years and into the future, as well as electing the remaining members of our Provincial Executive. It is especially important for early career teachers to become involved and to attend branch meetings and BGM since the issues being debated and the decisions that are made will impact upon you for many years.

During the summer I attended the AGM of the Canadian Teachers' Federation in Ottawa where I was elected to the CTF Executive as a Vice-President. As you are aware, the NLTA Past President, Winston Carter, also sits on the CTF Executive as President Elect. To my knowledge, this is the first time that two NLTA members have simultaneously held office on the CTF Executive. Another member of our Provincial Executive Council will be appointed to my previous seat on the CTF Board of Directors and the NLTA will have more representation and input on national education issues than ever before.

I also had the opportunity in July to attend Education International's 4th World Congress of educators in Porto Alegre, Brazil. It was certainly a very positive learning experience to be exposed to first hand accounts of challenges and successes experienced by teacher unions from so many parts of the world. While they in no way lessen the importance of what we attempt to achieve and/or preserve at home, the experiences of teachers and students in many countries and regions represented at this Conference (kidnapping, torture, murder, Aids epidemics, to name a few) made me more acutely aware of the role that we can play in providing whatever aid we can to these students and teachers. It also made me much more aware of the real dangers which accrue when education is not, or ceases to be, a top priority.

In closing I would like to remind us all that while it is extremely important for us to have a healthy and positive approach to our work, and while we all want to do the best that we can for the students in our care, we can be of little use to them, our families or our employer if we stretch ourselves beyond what is reasonably acceptable or healthy. Be healthy, be happy, be balanced; take the appropriate time to enjoy family, friends, work, and take some time just for you. If you have any questions or concerns I would be happy to hear from you, as would any member of our Administrative Staff.

On a personal note, I would like to say a sincere thank you for all the input and support I have been so fortunate to receive from the membership. My very best wishes for a successful and worthwhile year.

Fred.

Tales Told By Teachers, Volume I

It's back! A second printing of this very popular collection of tales related by teachers will be available the first week of October 2004.

The first printing (2,000 copies) was sold out in three months, and people from as far away as British Columbia still call to ask, "*Where can I get a copy of Tales Told By Teachers?*"

The 98 retired teachers who penned the 131 tales (in prose and poetry) in the first volume gave us a vivid, and sometimes poignant, picture of what teaching school was like years ago; they also revealed what teaching meant to them. Three of our authors were in their nineties when they submitted their material for this "Book of Memories", but still recalled quite clearly their experiences as very young teachers (15 and 16 years of age) facing their first teaching assignment, in a one-room school with students to be taught every subject from Kindergarten to High School – a daunting task for a teacher of any age!

In *Tales Told By Teachers, Volume I*, you will find moments to make you shed a tear, have a chuckle, or maybe even identify as being similar to an experience you had during your days in the classroom.

Cost per copy is $12.95 (plus postage, where applicable). To order your copy contact any one of the following:

Gladys Costella, bkc.mcdowell@nf.sympatico.ca, Tel: 709-634-2136
Emily Mullett, emilymaxwell.mullett@nf.sympatico.ca, Tel: 709-634-4611
Clayton Rice, crice@warp.nfld.net, Tel: 709-753-3920

Reasonable Professional Parameters

by EDWARD HANCOCK

I would like to offer a welcome back to all our members as we begin another school year. I trust that your summer was relaxing and enjoyable and that you have been able to start the new year refreshed and ready to meet the challenges it will surely bring. I offer my sincere wish that the year ahead will be a rewarding and successful one for each and every one of you.

The year ahead will indeed present its own challenges. Quite obviously, when we consider the events of last spring affecting our brothers and sisters in NAPE and CUPE, the collective bargaining atmosphere in this province's public sector is bleak. Considering the current provincial labour climate in the public sector, your Provincial Executive decided in June not to actively pursue the start up of contract negotiations at this time. In the meantime, of course, the provisions of the current agreement remain in full force and effect (Clause 43.02 of the Provincial Collective Agreement).

On June 10, 2004, Dr. David Dibbon of MUN's Faculty of Education released the results of his study on the impact of workload on teachers and students. Copies of that study were distributed to all schools before school closed in June. Entitled *It's About Time*, the study delves into the major workload issues for teachers. Your Association has already begun to pursue with government the recommendations made by Dr. Dibbon. On September 8, your President and I, along with NLTA Administrative Staff Officers, met with the Minister of Education and other Department officials to begin discussions on the recommendations arising from the Workload Study and how some of the issues raised might be addressed. Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to continue this process through further liaison meetings. We will continue to pursue the recommendations of the Workload Study and attempt to find ways to address teachers' workload issues away from the bargaining table. However, in the meantime, it is important that teachers recognize and exercise their own autonomy to set honest and defensible boundaries for the amount of work they do. Your President indicated this in a memorandum to all NLTA members which was faxed to all schools on June 16, 2004. He stated: "my best advice is to set parameters that are defensible from a professional point of view and that are fair both to you as a professional and to the employer".

In his report, Dr. Dibbon spoke of the "invisible work" of teachers; that which takes place outside the regular hours of classroom instruction and of which only teachers, their colleagues and their immediate families would be fully aware. We know that, considering the position of the present government on the provision of additional resources for public services, we cannot anticipate any major input of resources into the education system in the near future to alleviate teachers' workload concerns. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers themselves set personal professional parameters around their own work lives. The work of the teacher is such that there is always more to be done: refining and improving that lesson plan, seeking out more supplementary resource materials, assigning further pieces of work which must be collected and marked, further consultations with colleagues and external agencies, and the list goes on. We cannot, individually or collectively, control what others expect of schools and of teachers. We can control how we respond to those expectations. That is, we can accept our professional obligations but place them within the parameters of what is reasonably achievable, reasonably "doable", given the classroom conditions wherein we work and the time and resources provided.

As this new school year begins, consider making it your "new year's resolution" to begin drawing those boundaries around the extent to which you allow your professional responsibilities to intrude excessively into personal and family time. To do otherwise is to risk being consumed by the ever-increasing demands of our chosen profession.

Maternity and Sick Leave

by STEFANIE TUFF

Some readers will recall previous articles in *The Bulletin* on the right of natural mothers to access paid sick leave benefits for a certain period of time following childbirth. The purpose of this article is to provide a brief update on the issue and to inform new teachers and those who might not have read the earlier articles.

Pursuant to Article 17 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Article 28 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement), teachers are entitled to a period of up to 39 weeks of unpaid maternity/adoption/parental leave. For birth mothers, the normal practice had been to commence maternity leave as of the date of the baby's birth, then claim Employment Insurance (EI) maternity benefits for the first 15 weeks of leave and EI parental benefits for the rest of the period of leave (EI parental benefits may be used by either parent or split between them, up to a combined maximum of 35 weeks of benefits). The distinction between EI maternity and parental benefits is that the 15 weeks of maternity benefits are only available to natural mothers as they are intended to provide a specific period of time to allow for physical recovery from pregnancy and childbirth. Pregnant women who are unable to work due to illness, whether the illness is pregnancy related or not, may access their paid sick leave prior to commencing maternity leave or EI sickness benefits.

However, judicial and arbitration decisions in other Canadian jurisdictions have established that birth mothers are entitled to access any regular paid sick leave benefits available to them through their employment for a certain period of time following delivery. In Brooks v. Canada Safeway (1989), 59 D.L.R. (4th) 321, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that pregnancy and childbirth provide "a perfectly legitimate health-related reason for not working and as such should be compensated" by the employer's short term disability or paid sick leave plan. In Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, District 34 v. Essex County Board of Education (1998), 64 D.L.R. (4th) 455, the Ontario Court of Appeal followed this reasoning and held that the provisions of a collective agreement prohibiting sick benefits for a period of time surrounding childbirth were discriminatory. The arbitrator in another case involving an Ontario school board went so far as to rule that birth mothers should be entitled to an automatic six-week period of paid sick leave following delivery without the necessity of medical proof of illness.

In light of these decisions, the NLTA has taken the position that any teacher who gives birth is entitled to access paid sick leave for a certain period of time following the delivery of her baby, providing she has the necessary sick leave available. This position was first communicated to teachers in the January/February 2003 edition of *The Bulletin*, Vol. 46, No. 4. Despite an initial negative response from some school districts, our experience has been mainly positive. Responses from school districts to these requests have been fairly consistent: teachers are being advised that, if they have the necessary medical documentation at the time, a period of paid sick leave following delivery will be approved. Teachers who wish to avail of this option should, when making their initial request for maternity leave, inform their school boards that they plan to avail of paid sick leave for a period of time following the birth and that a medical note for this period will be provided.

Of course, it is up to each individual teacher to decide if she wants to take advantage of this option. From a financial perspective, a period of sick leave at full pay is more attractive than EI benefits. However, teachers who are at an early stage in their careers or who otherwise do not have a lot of sick leave available, may feel it is more important to save their sick days in case of future illness. If you have any questions regarding this issue or require assistance in relation to a maternity/sick leave request, please contact an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599.

Stefanie Tuff is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division at the NLTA.

Changes to Post 65 Life Insurance Program

by DON ASH

This article is intended to notify active members of changes to the NLTA Post 65 Life Insurance Program and its impact on NLTA insured members. The information has been previously mailed to all retired teachers impacted by these changes. Specifically, the $10,000 Paid Up portion of the Post 65 Life Insurance program has been eliminated effective September 1, 2004 and replaced with a $5.50 subsidy of the premium for the Post 65 $15,000 coverage. Previous to September 1, 2004, post 65 members paid $23.40 per month for the $15,000 coverage. With the subsidy, those post 65 members affected by the elimination of the Paid Up Life program will pay $17.90 per month. Further, the monthly life insurance premium for all insured members under age 65 will be reduced by 1.5 cents/$1,000 of coverage. These changes are a necessary result of NLTA Group Insurance Trustees exercising their fiduciary responsibility to maintain an affordable and sustainable group insurance program for all plan members.

All teachers (active and retired) under the NLTA Basic Life Insurance Plan are eligible for coverage of twice annual salary or twice annual pension up to age 65. At age 65, the NLTA Basic Life Insurance benefit of twice annual pension terminates and is replaced by a Post 65 Life Insurance program which, since 1989, has consisted of two components: a member pay-all Post 65 Life benefit – current benefit of $15,000 at a current monthly premium of $23.40, and a Post 65 Paid-Up Life benefit of $10,000.

The Post 65 $15,000 benefit continues to be available to all insured members. The Post 65 Paid Up Life program was eliminated effective September 1, 2004. A Post 65 Life Fund will be established consisting of money remaining from the former Post 65 Paid-Up Life Fund and an annual contribution of $192,000 from government. For those insured members turning age 65 after August 31, 2004, the fund will be utilized to pay a portion of the $15,000 Post 65 Life premium currently paid by members only. Actuarial analysis has determined that the newly created Post 65 Life Fund can indefinitely sustain a monthly subsidy of $5.50 per member. Insured members over age 65 before September 1, 2004 have paid up life certificates and will continue to pay the full premium for the $15,000 life benefit.

These changes are the result of problems with the funding of the Post 65 Paid Up Life benefit. Each September, $10,000 Life Insurance certificates were purchased via market tender for insured members who had turned 65 the previous year. To pay for these certificates and this program, a "surcharge" premium of 1.5¢/$1,000 of Basic Life insurance premiums was collected from all insured members under age 65, and matched by government. This premium was deposited in a Post 65 Paid-Up Life Fund used to purchase the certificates. The current annual contribution from government is approximately $192,000. An actuarial study in 2002 revealed a $21M unfunded future liability with the Post 65 Paid-Up Life program. The Paid-Up Life Fund would have been exhausted in several years, and extra annual payments from teachers and government in excess of $1M would have been required to purchase certificates. Consequently, NLTA Group Insurance Trustees considered the Paid-Up Life program as unsustainable in its current form.

In the March 17, 2004 correspondence from the Chairperson of Group Insurance Trustees, NLTA insured members were informed that discussions were ongoing with government to address the problem of the $21 million dollar unfunded liability. Insured members under age 65 were advised "that the Post 65 plan design is likely to be altered or eliminated in the future as a result of these discussions".

The goal of NLTA Trustees was to maintain a government contribution to a sustainable and affordable Post 65 life insurance benefit for the Post 65 group. Extensive discussions took place over two years between NLTA and government officials from Treasury Board and the Insurance Division

and explored a variety of options culminating in an "agreement in principle" which involves changes to the Post 65 Life Insurance program.

The impact of these changes are:

1. A reduction in Basic Life premium of 1.5¢/$1,000 of Basic Life coverage for all insured members under age 65.
2. For those teachers turning age 65 after August 31, 2004, a $5.50 reduction in the monthly premium for the $15,000 Life benefit.
3. Elimination of the $10,000 Post 65 Paid-Up Life benefit for those teachers turning 65 after August 31, 2004. (Insured members have the option to convert their pre-age 65 coverage of up to twice pension to individual policies within 31 days of turning age 65.)
4. Elimination of an unfunded $21M future liability.
5. Establishment of a stable and sustainable Post 65 Life insurance benefit with a continuing contribution from government.

The final wording and logistical details of the agreement between NLTA and government are being determined, but this article is intended as detailed notification of the changes which were effective on September 1, 2004. If there are any changes in substance to the agreement, members will be notified by your Group Insurance Trustees.

The NLTA Post 65 Paid-Up Life program established in 1989 was not properly funded. A 2002 actuarial report showed a $21M unfunded future liability. The program was neither affordable nor sustainable in its present form. In an effort to maintain governments annual contribution of $192,000 to a Post 65 Life benefit, NLTA Group Insurance Trustees engaged in discussions with government which resulted in the Post 65 Life Insurance program changes described above. The elimination of the $10,000 Post 65 Paid-Up Life benefit is unfortunate, but unavoidable. However, NLTA has achieved the objective of maintaining government's contribution to a Post 65 Life Insurance benefit for teachers. The elimination of the Post 65 Paid-Up Life benefit has achieved a reduction in Life Insurance premiums for both teachers under age 65 and over age 65, while eliminating an unaffordable $21M liability for both government and teachers.

Don Ash is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division at the NLTA.

New Long Term Care Plan

The NLTA Group Insurance Trustees are pleased to announce that a **Long Term Care Plan** is now available to NLTA members and their families (spouse, adult children, and parents). The plan has been arranged through Johnson Inc., and is underwritten by Maritime Life.

Long Term Care is the assistance or supervision a person may require if they suffer a functional impairment for an extended period of time. **Long Term Care** refers to a wide array of skilled and personal care services that may be provided in one's own home or community, or care in a Nursing Facility.

Long Term Care Insurance coverage provides assistance with the expenses for in-home or institutional care that can have a devastating effect on the assets a person has spent a lifetime accumulating. Long Term Care Insurance also helps relieve the burden that caregiving can put on family and friends.

Long Term Care is required by people who need assistance with Activities of Daily Living or who have Cognitive Impairment, such as Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Activities of Daily Living are the basic tasks most of us take for granted – eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, continence, and transferring positions (moving from a bed to a chair).

There are many circumstances that may cause a person to require Long Term Care service, including: Alzheimer's Disease; Arthritis; Bone fracture; Broken hip / Hip replacement; Emphysema; General weakness due to aging; Heart attack; Joint replacement; Parkinson's Disease; Spinal cord injury; and Stroke.

In determining your need for this coverage, you should consider your family history; age; lifestyle; and financial circumstances.

Active and retired members of the NLTA are eligible, as well as family members (spouse, adult children, parents) between the ages of 18 and 89.

NLTA has selected a program to provide the best possible coverage for the majority of members and their spouses. Not every applicant will qualify for NLTA Long Term Care Plan coverage. Applicants must provide satisfactory evidence of health to the insurance company and it is therefore advisable to consider this type of coverage when in reasonably good health.

Further information is available at www.johnson.ca/LTC or by calling Johnson Inc. at 1-800-563-1528.

Johnson Inc. Insurance

Bill Chaisson

2004 Bancroft, Barnes & Special Recognition Awards

Award Winners Honoured

In keeping with past tradition, the efforts of teachers who have made significant contributions to both their profession and their Association were recognized this past year. The following provides information on the awards and the winners.

Wayne Hallett

Rudy Porter

The Bancroft Award

Bill Chaisson is recipient of the 2004 NLTA Bancroft Award. This award was established in 1980 to mark the 90th anniversary of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The award recognizes outstanding service at the branch level of the NLTA for the betterment of education and professionalism for teachers.

A teacher for over 15 years, Bill has been an active member of the Humber Branch of the NLTA since 1995. He has held numerous Executive offices at the branch level including Member at Large (1995-96), Political Action Officer (1996-97), President (1999-2003), and Past President (2003-04).

Bill has been very active at the committee level including membership on the School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee, Occupational Health and Safety Committee, and Scholarship Fund Raising Committee. He chaired the Resolutions Committee for BGM in 2001 and 2003 and has been a chair of the School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee, Humber Branch Social Committee, Humber Branch Scholarship Selection Committee, Retirement Dinner Committee, and the Substitute Teachers Committee.

Bill has initiated many activities during his involvement with the Humber Branch. He established a permanent position on the Executive for a substitute teacher representative, helped organize the first ever substitute teachers forum in the Humber Branch, and has successfully organized retirement dinners and social activities for the members of his branch. In 2003 Bill was recipient of the NLTA President's Award, in 2001 he received the NLTA Johnson's Bursary, and in 1987 he won the Robert G. Reid Memorial Scholarship.

Bill has been a member of the NLTA Provincial Executive since 2002. He resides in Corner Brook where he is currently a teacher at Regina High School.

The Barnes Award

Wayne Hallett is recipient of the 2004 NLTA Barnes Award. This award was established in 1987 to recognize outstanding professional development services provided by teachers at the Special Interest Council level.

Wayne has been involved in professional development within the province for a number of years. He served as President of the Program Specialists Special Interest Council from 1998 to 2002, and was the founding executive member of the Connaigre Regional of the Council of Special Services in 1987.

While serving as President of the Program Specialists SIC, Wayne worked with the executive to host two provincial conferences, the second of which was organized in cooperation with the Provincial PD Alliance. From 1986-92 he hosted four bi-annual Regional Career Fairs for all Level II and III students in the Connaigre region, and in 1988 he initiated a very successful Connaigre Region four-branch Professional Development Conference.

From 1978-96 Wayne was an executive member of the Baie d'Espoir Branch of the NLTA, holding all positions including Branch President for three two-year terms. He has been a member of many provincial committees including Pathways Working Group, Special Education Policy Review Committee, Student Support Services Advisory Committee, Guidance Curriculum Committee, Guidance Foundation Document Committee, and others.

In 1995 Wayne was a recipient of the Johnson Special Recognition Award for community service.

Wayne retired in 2003 as a Student Support Program Specialist with the Baie Verte-Central-Connaigre School District. He is currently Principal of Jens Haven Memorial School in Nain, Labrador.

The Special Recognition Award 2004

Rudy Porter is recipient of the 2004 NLTA Special Recognition Award. This award was instituted in 1990 by Johnson Incorporated to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The award is presented annually to an active NLTA member who has made a

major contribution to the cultural, social and/or community life of Newfoundland and Labrador.

A teacher for 30 years, Rudy has been very active at the school and community levels. He has been chairperson of the Englee United Church Board of Management for the past eight years, member of the Englee Recreation Committee for the past 20 years, and for the past 14 years he has been chairperson of the Englee United Church Manse Committee, choir member and musician for the United Church, and secretary for the Official Board of United Church.

In previous years Rudy was actively involved with groups such as the Lung Association Campaign, Englee Hockey and Broomball Leagues, Minor Hockey, and the Caplin Festival Committee. He was a member of the Englee Town Council for 14 years, serving as Deputy Mayor for eight, and was a member of the White Bay Central Joint Council where he led delegations to government lobbying for issues such as paved roads, a new Health Centre, and a new Recreation Centre.

Besides his activities at the community level, Rudy was a member of the executive of the Bremco Branch of the NLTA for 29 years, serving as Branch President from 1996 to 2004. He has received numerous awards for his school and community involvement including the NLTA Bancroft Award, the Dr. B.T. Gillard Citizen of the Year Award for the Town of Englee, and the Town of Englee Volunteer of the Year Award.

Rudy resides in Englee where he retired in 2004 as a teacher at H.G. Fillier Academy.

Summer is Over ... But the Enjoyment Isn't

by CLAUDETTE E. S. COOMBS

Summer serves so many purposes for teachers but some of the top priorities include relaxation and enjoyment. We use the school break to rejuvenate our spirit via assorted venues. We may even take a course to enhance our professional (or financial) status. As the year progresses we anticipate the summer break where we have no lesson plans or exams and most of all, no rigid schedule. We can rest, holiday, picnic, travel, renovate the house, stay at the cabin, do anything or do nothing! The freedom to choose provides immense psychological satisfaction.

As the temperature starts to cool off and the calendar shows an ever-increasing closeness to that opening day of school, we may feel a sense of sadness, apprehension or even a fleeting moment of dread. We focus on the changes that we frequently interpret in a negative way. We see more constraints, fewer opportunities to engage in social or personal pursuits, more demands on our time and energy, and less freedom. In reality, the changes are just that, changes. They are neither negative nor positive. We attribute those judgements according to our own perspectives, attitudes and general outlook on life.

Back to School

Going back to school signifies a change in routine, a more demanding schedule and a myriad of additional stressors for most teachers. It should not mean that we put our personal lives on hold until the next holiday. Nor does it mean that our professional lives should be devoid of pleasure. We became teachers because we wanted to work with students, watch them grow, encourage a fascination with learning and favourably influence the direction of their lives. Well, the students are still there and each year we get another chance to fulfill our professional goals, just in case last year didn't quite turn out as we had hoped.

Now, as a preventive measure, we need to focus not on our impact on students, but on their impact on us. We readjust to the school routine with its physical and mental challenges, but with added stressors things can quickly become unmanageable and overwhelming. If we don't maintain a healthy balance, we succumb and pay an unnecessary toll on our health, relationships and quality of life.

Preserve the Benefits

To preserve the physical and mental benefits of summer, we must diligently protect our personal resources and maintain reasonable components of our "holiday" lifestyle. The trick is to stay happy and healthy while still getting the job done. Although this may sound like an impossible task, we may not need to make drastic changes to our work routine. Instead, including small changes can have a radical impact on our well-being.

Review the many functions which the summer holiday serves. The time away from school acts as a tool to identify things which we enjoy, refresh our spirit and revitalize our body. It reminds us of the importance of including those in our lives year round and it can be a practice session for building pleasantries into our regular agenda.

Despite our intentions to retain a healthy lifestyle, daily priorities often change with the conditions surrounding us. Staying healthy, motivated and satisfied throughout the school year depends on ensuring that we reserve time and energy for the important personal components of our lives. Among other things, these include: relationships, health, personal growth and future goals. Protecting time, space and energy requires our permission. We must first believe that it is necessary to reserve resources for ourselves, and then believe that we have a right to do so. In reality, it is an obligation. We have made commitments to our employer, our families and friends and to ourselves. To fulfill those commitments, we must protect ourselves.

Staying healthy also depends on feeling professionally content that we are doing the job we want to do. This means that we are confident in our subject area, comfortable with our interpersonal interactions and enjoy most aspects of our role as a teacher.

The benefits include relative harmony and health. There will be occasional discord, but building in time for personal supports keeps things in perspective and allows for the best possible health under the given circumstances. The consequences of ignoring personal needs are encapsulated in the word "stress". All avenues suffer if we neglect the basics of self-care.

Strategies for Staying Healthy

Some strategies can be easily incorporated into our lives without too much difficulty or resistance. The adoption of other strategies poses a greater challenge. Select the things that best suit your interests, resources and lifestyle. But as a minimum, consider the following areas when planning to make healthy changes.

Adjust expectations. Whether they are for yourself or others, having expectations that are unrealistic is a major source of distress and often leads to unsuccessful attempts at change. Avoid creating conflict between intentions and reality, due to unrealistic expectations.

Identify and fulfill personal essentials. First know what you need. While some people need solitude, others feel they can't possibly exist without an active social life or a personal fitness program. Then establish a routine which allows you to meet your needs.

Monitor and control stress. Stay in tune with your body and your spirit. Learn to quickly identify when things are moving out of balance. Acquire the skills and employ personal stress management practices which are appropriate for you. If you want direction or support, contact your EAP Coordinator.

Incorporate pleasure. We may choose to do something for a variety of reasons, but we choose to continue because doing so has sufficient rewards. Everyday life should be filled with a variety of rewards. Teaching days should be sprinkled with pleasant moments. There are mundane and arduous tasks in all aspects of our lives, but to retain the thrill of life we must incorporate pleasures as well. When we allow the joy to escape, be overlooked or take a low priority – we lose, unnecessarily.

Just as we set and follow outcome-based curriculum plans, we must also establish personal goals and action plans to address desired outcomes. Setting short-term goals and employing adequate strategies assists us in overriding the daily factors which interfere with our success.

For specific tips on healthy strategies check the Wellness articles on the NLTA website.

Claudette Coombs is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Claudette Coombs (ext. 242) or Marie Wall (ext. 265).

Why not, indeed?

by VAUGHN GRANTER & BEVERLEY PARK

If you attend a national conference on education in this country you can be assured of one thing … you will encounter a disproportionate number of people from Newfoundland and Labrador. Some will be delegates from this province, but many others will be those who have left Newfoundland and Labrador and who now work in other provinces – as principals, district office staff, leaders of teacher organizations, or superintendents. Whether it's in the breeding or the building, we have an incredible reputation across the country for producing excellent teachers and leaders. It's something others recognize in us, but which we sometimes fail to see in ourselves.

Leadership is not easily defined. Each and every teacher is a leader in his or her classroom. We all take the lead in various aspects of school and community life. This article will focus on one group of leaders – those who occupy those corner offices with the windows overlooking the golf course, with the big oak desks – oops! reality check! – those who occupy the school's "main office" which in some cases is the heaviest traffic zone in the school as teachers breeze by to pick up mail, make a few final copies, or some student comes by in need of a band-aid. This article is about school principals and vice-principals and what makes them and their particular jobs so rewarding… though it may not be immediately obvious.

Perhaps it's that Newfoundland and Labrador character again, but the rewards and joys of being a school leader, like the mostly unexplored natural beauty of our province, is a well-kept secret. You have to keep your ears well tuned to hear the positive things about being a principal or a vice-principal here. Too often we hear of the extra workload, the inadequate monetary returns, the added burden of being caught in the middle. And the index of titles from the professional journals read more like a list of woes than a celebration of leadership. The April 2004 issue of *Educational Leadership* was themed "Leading in Tough Times" and featured articles such as *The Wounded Leader* and *When Leadership Spells Danger*.

Unfortunately, the negative messages are getting through. There are fewer and fewer applicants for administrative positions. Teacher leaders look outside the profession instead of looking to the offices of principal and vice-principal to fulfill their leadership ambitions. The result is that good people are missing opportunities here and the position which should be held in esteem is losing some of the cachet it should have.

Lest you think that this is just a view of the landscape from someone who has a bifocal prescription for rose coloured glasses, we talked to some of our colleagues – in small schools, in big schools; in Labrador and on the island; in urban and rural areas; from Kindergarten to Grade 12. It wasn't difficult to find people who were and are inspired and inspiring leaders occupying the offices of principal and vice-principal. In fact, they seemed relieved to be asked to comment on the positive aspects of their role! They did not have to dig deep or search for a few positive comments. They came easily.

Charlotte Barrington, former principal of St. Bernard's Primary School in Witless Bay (now principal at Holy Trinity Elementary in Torbay) reminds us: *The greatest reward of being a principal is seeing staff, students and parents working toward a common goal. It is satisfying to see new initiatives embraced by all… like our Peaceful Schools Initiative. When one person thought of an idea, another one was generated. Together, as a team, we feel we have been able to accomplish a lot.*

…The children keep me positive. In a primary school it is very refreshing to listen to their insights. I can remember one day when I was particularly busy, a small child in grade one came up to me and kept on trying to interrupt the conversation I was having with a teacher. I asked him to wait but he insisted that I listen to him, so I did. He said, "I just wanted to wish you a happy birthday". Children have their priorities straight and they make you realize what the "big rocks" in life should be.

…There's a great satisfaction in getting things to run smoothly in a school. On days when everything is going right you forget about the frustrating times!

Leo Freeborn, on the other end of the province at St. Boniface All Grade in Ramea has another, though equally positive perspective: *There is no greater feeling of satisfaction than knowing you have listened to and encouraged and supported a teacher or a student with a plan or an idea that has moved them further toward their objective. We are role models and examples for others to look to and to follow. It is particularly satisfy-*

ing to know that others confide and believe in you. My personal sense of success and achievement is derived from following behind those for whom I am an educational leader while supporting and guiding them as they move ahead. In essence, we lead by following and we follow by leading. My personal feeling of success is the cumulative success of others.

Patricia MacDonald at Indian River High School in Springdale also speaks of the influence that she has as a principal …and along with the responsibility of that influence her words echo a deep, deep pride: *Being a principal is not like anything else. We have the opportunity to influence so many people – not only our students, but our staff too. Many years from now we will see our students and the potential we knew was there will be realized. It is a great sense of satisfaction to know that we have played a small part in people's lives. Through the rough times we are kept going by the touching act of students and staff. Sometimes when we appear overwhelmed, notes, cards, and pictures show up when we least expect them and we know that we are appreciated. Sure, there are piles of work piles, but we attend a concert and see the students performing or we watch a team win a game and see their glowing pride and sense of accomplishment and we are suddenly rewarded. Few other professions provide such a sense of pleasure from being with people. If we can inspire one person to be his or her ultimate best; to try something new, to accept a challenge; to take a risk; we have accomplished something more valuable than money.*

Ramona Noseworthy knows what it is like to take a risk, to accept a challenge. Perhaps it was a principal like Patricia who inspired her. Now at A.P. Low Primary in Labrador City she writes: *After seventeen years teaching experience at the high school level, I started what felt like a whole new career three years ago when I became an administrator at a primary school… quite a leap of faith for someone who thought she was in her "niche" with older students. For many years though I had been yearning for change, and this was about the biggest change I could experience… a change of level of care, philosophy, practice. Three years later I can unequivocally state that I love it! The job is truly never boring!*

That may sound like a tall order but there is reassurance in Ramona's message to us too. She continues: *An administrator does not need to know or to do everything. What an administrator needs to know is which staff members are the most likely to be able to add valuable insight and bring knowledge to particular situations. The administrator then has the necessary information to go forward.*

And, since an administrator is one of the authors of this article it is only fitting to get his perspective on being a school principal. Vaughn Granter searched for a metaphor, some way of capturing what it really is like to be in that position. And while searching for the symbolic, he described the reality around him. This excerpt from an author to author email captures it brilliantly: *It is 3:25 am June 25th and I am at the school with 130+ graduating students at the end of their high school years. The grad has gone well. Two nights of glorious moments for parents, students, grandparents, teachers. What else makes the principal and vice-principal job more rewarding? I sat last evening at the formal ceremony. I saw a student who struggled for three years, heard his name announced at the grad ceremony for an award he was about to receive. Unlike most who walked with calm and collected posture towards the stage, he moved with a fast pace, unbelieving that "HE" received an award. We all took pleasure and shared in his excitement as he moved towards the stage and thought about his three years of high school.*

The job is described as having an element of self-discovery as we rise to new and unexpected challenges – like the image of the Fighting Newfoundlander, chin tucked, heading over the hill without knowing what lies a few yards ahead. The mix of the Newfoundland and Labrador soul and positive nurturing attitude is perhaps what makes Newfoundland administrators so successful.

Ramona Noseworthy with a group of primary students.

The words of Great Big Sea's *Ordinary Day* say it well. "And I say way-hey-hey, it's just an ordinary day, and it's all a state of mind. At the end of the day, you've just got to say it's all right. It's all right, it's all right."

Newfoundland and Labrador schools are filled with a wealth of talent. We have a qualified, exceptional teaching force. To be a principal or vice-principal when you are surrounded by people like that – "Why Not?" says Vaughn.

Why not, indeed?

Vaughn Granter is Principal of Herdman Collegiate in Corner Brook and Beverley Park is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

Onsite 2004: Gros Morne Institute for Teachers

A Personal Reflection

by RENE WICKS

Imagine hiking the Tablelands in Gros Morne National Park, exploring one of the very few places on this planet where the earth's mantle has risen to the surface. Picture yourself sitting on the beach in Western Brook Pond, paints and canvas in hand, creating your artistic impressions of the magnificent fjord before you. Sail from Norris Point to spend a morning with an oceanographer, studying the temperatures and salinity of diverse waters, getting a close-up view of microscopic plankton and other deep-water marine life. These are just a few images from Onsite 2004, a field-based traveling institute held for classroom teachers.

Onsite 2004, held from August 22-28, was the fourth annual institute located on the Great Northern Peninsula, where participants worked closely with Parks Canada interpreters to learn about the geology, culture, and history of the region. This year's theme was "A Week of Water and Wonder" focusing the 23 participants on the water-shaped landscape of Gros Morne. The group, comprised largely of classroom teachers from all levels, enjoyed a wide range of experiences first-hand:

- An introduction to Gros Morne National Park: Water, Glaciers, and Landscape;
- A glacial landforms road tour from Rocky Harbour to Trout River;
- Visit to Trout River, a community adapted to its landscape;

- Dry Gulch: a desert-like stream in a wet coastal environment;
- Tablelands field program, to learn about plate tectonics, glacial landforms, plant adaptations, microclimates, and soil chemistry;
- Exhibits and learning activities at the park's Discovery Centre;
- Stream habitat and the life cycle of the salmon at Lomond River;
- Tour of Memorial University's Marine Biology Station at Norris Point;
- Boat-based ocean studies on Bonne Bay;
- The salt marshes and muddy shores around Lobster Cove Head;
- The Cow Head Community Trail to the Head and lighthouse;
- A session on ecological integrity;
- Bog and stream studies at Western Brook;
- Art in the Park at Western Brook, where everyone created "works of visual art";
- Pond study at Berry Hill, where the "Path to Verse" session challenged participants to further nurture their artistic abilities and write poetry;
- Green Point, a site of international significance, where the geological ages are clearly visible and graptolite fossils are plentiful!

As in other years, the participating teachers were provided with three working sessions where they created lesson plans for their particular level or course. To accomplish this, they reflected on their field experiences to structure plans around specific curriculum outcomes so that they would be of use to colleagues around the province. These lesson plans are available to any teacher at the Virtual Teacher Centre web site, www.virtualteachercentre.ca.

This is the fourth year I have been involved in the planning of these institutes and every year the enthusiasm of the participants is tremendous, with many commenting that it is the best professional development experience they have ever had. It has also been a pleasure to plan similar annual institutes for Memorial University teacher interns, held each

September for the past three years. Personally, I find these institutes represent not only fabulous learning, but have an aesthetic, even spiritual dimension, as you touch the very core and beginnings of our planet. The incredible beauty of the region leaves you in awe, and you develop a much greater respect and appreciation for the geology, ecology, history, and, yes, the fragility of this precious environment. We hope that the lesson plans can in some small way help convey some of this to our students.

On the Tablelands teachers study the mantle of the earth.

I commend Dorothy Parsons and the creative staff of Parks Canada for their brilliant planning and practical presentations. I have also enjoyed working with the Department of Education's science consultant, Brad Clarke, as he and I conduct the sessions on lesson planning and curriculum connections.

Bog study at Western Brook.

The August institutes have two rotating agendas and next year we travel up the Northern Peninsula to include historic sites at Port au Choix, L'Anse aux Meadows, and Red Bay on the Labrador coast. Look for information next spring. We'd love to see you there!

Onsite 2004 is cosponsored by Parks Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, Department of Education, Red Ochre Regional Economic Development Board, Gros Morne Cooperating Association, Corner Brook/Deer Lake/St. Barbe School District, and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

The institute's theme is "A Week of Water and Wonder".

René Wicks is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

Government Money Purchase Pension Plan (GMPP) Information Sessions October 25 – November 10, 2004

Topics include: Acquisition of Canada Life Securities Inc.; Benefits of the GMPP; Your investment options and how the funds are performing; Planning for retirement; and Your options upon termination of employment

Session Dates/Location:

- Oct. 25 – Wabush (2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Wabush Hotel
- Oct. 26 – Goose Bay (2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Hotel North
- Oct. 27 – Stephenville (2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Holiday Inn
- Oct. 28 – Corner Brook (2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Holiday Inn
- Nov. 1 – Grand Falls-Windsor (2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Mount Peyton Hotel
- Nov. 2 – Gander (2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Hotel Gander
- Nov. 3 – Clarenville (2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Clarenville Inn
- **Nov. 4 – Marystown (2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Marystown Lions Club**
- Nov. 9 – St. John's (2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Airport Plaza Hotel
- Nov. 10 – St. John's (9:00 am, 2:00 pm & 7:00 pm), Airport Plaza Hotel

Colleen Henderson, Communication & Education Manager of Group Retirement Services (GRS), will facilitate these sessions. A representative from the Department of Finance, Pensions Division, will also be in attendance.

ALL plan members are encouraged to attend – no need to RSVP!

For more information please call:

Mike Rickert (709) 729-6073 or David Lidstone (709) 729-6084

Historica National Teachers' Institute

Newfoundlanders Take Montreal by Storm

by MARY VAN THIEL

This past July, six teachers from Newfoundland and Labrador attended a seven-day learning program as part of Historica's Professional Development National Teachers' Institute for teachers of Canadian History. I, along with fellow teachers Christine Fleming, Kerry Park, and Barb Pynn attended the secondary institute entitled *Intercultural Encounters in History: Exploring the Teaching of Canadian History*. Teacher-participant Beth Hearn and teacher-facilitator Randy Rogers attended the Grade 4-9 institute held at McGill University called *History All Around Us: Strategies and Perspectives in Teaching Canadian History*.

Teachers from Macdonald Drive Junior High (l-r): Barb Pynn, Mary van Thiel, Christine Fleming and Kerry Park.

Teachers from across Canada came together in one of two bilingual settings. The aim of each institute was to provide teachers with opportunities to meet and share ideas and strategies for making history education more fun and interesting. The idea is to take the knowledge from the institute and apply it to the outcomes for each province.

At the secondary institute teachers enhanced their knowledge of Canadian History and learned how to incorporate this knowledge into their teaching. Teachers developed a project that can be applied to the classroom. During the first day of the Teachers' Institute, participants attended a presentation about YouthLinks. This online program was established by the Historica Foundation to help history and social studies teachers at the high school level develop pedagogical activities that are fun and dynamic.

The elementary institute concluded with the National Heritage Fair, an event that inspires lasting memories, new friendships, and experiences that strengthens participating students' connections to the history of Canada. Students representing all provinces and territories, whose projects are selected from the Regional Fairs, take part in a week of sightseeing, historic tours, hands-on workshops, and special events. It is a unique opportunity for students to learn about the history and heritage of a specific region of Canada and interact with young people from a diversity of backgrounds.

Melanie Hoskins, a Grade 6 student from Larkhall Academy in St. John's, and Kurtis Coombs, a Grade 8 student from Mount Pearl Intermediate School, represented the Avalon region of Newfoundland at the National Fair. Participants of past National Fairs also joined the adventure and reported the events of the fair. Representing Newfoundland and Labrador was Adam Lewis and our head of delegation for the fairs was teacher Andrea Quinlan from Mary Queen of Peace School in St. John's, assisted by teacher Erin Dawe from Holy Trinity Elementary in Torbay. Both enthusiastic teachers worked hard to keep the 15 students from Newfoundland and Labrador occupied for the week.

The Historica Fairs program is dedicated to engaging children in the exploration of our past. Historica is proud to work with local volunteer committees made up of educators, business people, and museum and heritage groups who organize events and support students by providing materials and resources.

Catherine Cahill, resource teacher and Grade 6 teacher at Bishop Abraham School in St. John's, contributes her time and talents to meet the needs of students served by Historica programs. Catherine has assisted Historica to improve the quality of history by organizing fairs in the three schools that she had taught in over the past six years. The Right Honourable Antonio Lamer, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada and immediate past president of the national Historica council, awarded Cathérine the Silver Level Historica Pin at the closing ceremonies of the Avalon Regional Historica Fair in May 2004.

Watch for exciting events from Historica. The National Tattoo Our Moose Contest and our Provincial T-shirt Contest will be back. These contests are a unique way for students to explore and celebrate Canadian heritage, to win prizes, and to have some fun too. Information on the Heritage Fairs can be found on the Internet at www.heritage.k12.nf.ca and www.histori.ca.

Mary van Thiel is a teacher at Macdonald Drive Junior High in St. John's.

Coastal Labrador New Teacher Institute a Success

by ALEX HICKEY

Launching a new journey is always a challenge, especially if it's to a place and circumstance you've never experienced before. During the weekend of July 9-11, 17 eager and determined new teachers hired by the Labrador School Board to teach in north coast communities gathered for the Coastal Labrador New Teacher Institute at Memorial University. Sponsored by Memorial, NLTA, the Department of Education, the VTC and CDLI, the Institute is in its second year. The Institute attempts to address concerns around attrition and teacher readiness for careers in rural schools.

Throughout the weekend participants were exposed to many of the challenges and opportunities that their new teaching positions would present. The institute placed a great deal of emphasis on the realities of teaching in remote settings and focused on breaking down some of the myths. This, coupled with many discussions around the pragmatics of moving North, contributed to a very successful event.

The Virtual Teacher Centre and the Centre for Northern Studies shared the organizing work. Sessions included:

- a report on research into student learning in selected communities by Dr. David Philpott;
- an exploration of the personal, professional, and cultural environments in North Coast communities by board office staff;
- an examination of student learning outcomes and the prescribed curriculum by Eldred Barnes, Director of Program Development;
- an exploration of the many personal and professional stresses that can confront a teacher by Claudette Coombs of the Employee Assistance Program;
- an introduction to the practical side of teaching on the Labrador coast by Cindy Fleet, Assistant Director of Programs with the Labrador School Board; and
- a hands-on experience with the VTC and its resources which will be used with the group to support an online learning community throughout the year.

Participants quickly sought out and found others who would be teaching in the same school. This, in combination with social activities, added great value to the experience. Evaluations of the Institute were overwhelmingly positive. All who took part were awarded a certificate. Any shortcomings identified by participants will be addressed for next year.

I cannot express how valuable this was. When I came in here on Friday night I was about 70% scared to death and 30% excited. Now, that has totally turned around... I see now that I have the opportunity to grow both professionally and personally in ways I hadn't even dreamed of. — Participant Quote

This was a very informative session. The general consensus I have heard was that the session has helped relieve a lot of stress! — Participant Quote

Alex Hickey is Coordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre.

Front Row: Penny Layden, Deanne Gill, Laurie Ann Strange, Phyllis Martin, Jeff Francis, Cindy Fleet, and Eldred Barnes
Second Row: Bernadette Power, Deborah Staples, Cassandra Ivany, Angela Rose, Jennifer Lomond, and Alex Hickey
Back Row: Mervin Parsons, Paul Hudson, Penny Malloy, Shane Welcher, Hilary Primmer, and Claudette Coombs
Missing from photo: Craig Sutherland, Sheldon Slaney, Debra Budgell

ArtsSmarts at Hazelwood Elementary

The ArtsSmarts program at Hazelwood Elementary in St. John's is an ongoing project that culminated this past school year in a published children's book centered upon the theme "Places to Visit in St. John's." The project was once again coordinated by Pat Hayden Ryan and Grade 1 teacher Lori Lane.

In retrospect, over the past four years Hazelwood Elementary has been abuzz with ArtsSmarts projects. This past year has been the most ambitious. The school itself has taken the lead role in providing the stimulus and impetus, which attests to the growth in confidence and competence in the arts since the program first began. This very tightknit thematic project was in perfect alignment with the ArtsSmarts philosophy and guidelines. There was an integration of the arts in the school curriculum, resulting in an enriched curriculum and a deeper sense of appreciation with newfound knowledge.

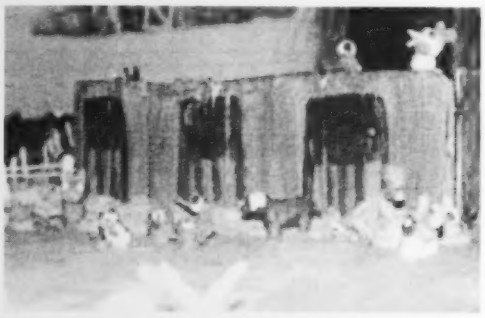
Six specific areas of the city of St. John's were identified to correspond with a unit of study outlined in the Provincial Curriculum Guides for grades Kindergarten to 6. Those six areas of the city became the focus of six separate field trips (one grade level to each area) and served to supplement the study and research conducted in the classrooms. A local artist accompanied the teachers and students from each level, each one working with a different media, to plan and design illustrations for the soon-to-be published children's book.

This book is being written by two of the Grade 1 teachers at Hazelwood – Lori Lane and Kathy Winsor. To be published by Creative Book Publishing, the book is scheduled for release in Spring 2005 and will be available for purchase in many bookstores across the province. The school is eagerly looking forward to the launching of the book as it is anticipated to serve as a valuable teaching aid for students. Indeed the general citizenry and/or visiting tourists may look upon this book as an information guide to the city.

During the year, Kindergarten children worked in plasticine with artist Penny Wooding and created sculptures of their memories of Lester's Farm. Grade 1 students learned quilting from artist Jackie Ryan using the images from all six of the chosen sites they visited by bus tour. Grade 2 students depicted various scenes of Bowring Park in paper maché collage with artist Undrea Norris. Grade 3 classes studied fishing villages and used their sketches from their field trip to Quidi Vidi to create watercolor paintings with artist Pat Hayden Ryan. Grade 4 students did rug hooking with artist Elizabeth Tucker, each class producing a hooked rug from their views of and from Signal Hill. Grade 5 students studied and participated in a guided tour of the city and did acrylic paintings from cut out wooden shapes with artist Elaine Greeley. Grade 6 classes studied the architecture of churches in St. John's and did black and white photography with artist Sheilagh O'Leary. The students' photography, which was quite remarkable, has been turned into a series of four posters and used as a fundraiser for the production of the book. These posters are currently available for purchase from Hazelwood Elementary or from the Downhomer Shoppe, Spurrell Gallery and Decor Framing in St. John's. The original photos are currently being forwarded to Ottawa for exhibit at the Ottawa Art Gallery as part of a national ArtsSmarts art exhibit.

With the help of artist Elaine Greeley, Grade 5 students created colourful acrylic paintings of St. John's row houses.

The staff of Hazelwood mounted an exhibition of the artwork of each grade level. The exhibition proved to be an interesting drawing card that attracted parents, school board officials, members of the news media, and the public at large.



Kindergarten students created plasticine sculptures of Lester's Farm with the help of artist Penny Wooding.

Administration, staff and students remain captivated by the overwhelming success of the project. Everyone from enthusiastic city officials to various members of the media have provided very positive feedback, giving the school new reasons to be proud of a very rewarding experience. The media hype included Karl Wells from CBC's *Canada Now*; Kelly Ann Evans from Roger's Television's *Out of the Fog*; and *The Sunday Independent* newspaper did a full page colored feature article. The Grade 5 row houses were held on display for one month at the Council Chambers of St. John's and will later be returned to the Council Chambers as a permanent display. "The sale of posters is continuing to promote the value of art in the curriculum, and of course the book release will keep the project alive and memorable for many years to come," says Lori Lane. "All in all, it should be noted that there has been a very positive reaction from all involved, which verifies once more the creative potential of all children. It shows what benefits can accrue when the arts community is involved in the school programs. Art is not just for a few or for a short period of time. Art's for all and Art's for life."

Financial Planning for Higher Education

by PAT HOGAN

For most families, many financial needs like student debt repayment, mortgage and car payments, and the many demands of regular and unexpected expenses compete for scarce resources. There are so many "short-term" priorities that "long-term" financial planning seems like a desirable, but impractical, "out-of-the-question" consideration. Consider your child's higher education…

In reality, any education planning by a young parent must be tentative and of a preliminary nature. It also must be connected with other financial goals – a positive cash flow, appropriate insurance coverage, debt management, retirement savings, and spending on the fun things of life.

Education planning involves many considerations: your child's abilities, aptitudes, personal goals, motivations, etc. As well, parental attitudes to higher education and its value are as important as your aspirations for your child. And many of these factors only get fleshed out as your child grows older and advances along in their school career. And, as teachers, we know that each child is different and the considerations are unique.

That being said, many couples do wish to assist their children financially with anticipated post-secondary education up to the level of a completed undergraduate degree or equivalent at age 21. Truly, a "debt-free" start into graduate studies, professional or technical school or the working world would be a desirable goal. But so much for dreams. In reality, there are four ways to finance this goal:

1. An "in-trust" (non-registered) investment account will accumulate savings in your child's name;
2. A "family trust" – legal and tax advice are recommended for this option;
3. A "scholarship trust". These are pooled group plans where the benefits assist other children if your child does not attend;

Note: For these three options, the CESG (Canada Education Savings Grant) is not available *nor* are the savings tax-sheltered.

4. As a result, the fourth option – RESPs (Registered Education Savings Plans) – are the preferred and recommended route for most families, especially since the CESG arrived in 1998. The CESG is a federal government grant paid to RESP plans annually.

An RESP

An RESP is a financial (savings) plan that will assist your child – and children to come – with their higher education years from now. It can be set up at any age prior to higher education, although special rules apply to children ages 15-17. You can contribute any amount subject to annual and lifetime limits.

The main benefits are: children are assisted with the needed financial resources required to open the door of opportunity that post-secondary education provides; investment income is not taxed until the funds are withdrawn from the plan and then they are taxed (if at all) to the student; and CESGs have been added by the government to enhance the attractiveness of RESPs and to encourage public participation.

Example: Here is a "best case" scenario designed to maximize the benefits and minimize the cost. It will cost $5.48 a day ($166 a month) – or less with the additional assistance of (both sets of) grandparents, special family friends, or godparents.

Here is how it works… After birth, you set up a family plan RESP and apply for a SIN number for your newborn child. $166 a month (or $2,000 annually) is deposited for 21 years for a total of $42,000, the maximum allowable contribution. The federal government will then assist with the CESG to the tune of $400 annually for 18 years for a total of $7,200, the maximum allowable grant.

With the magic of long-term compound growth inside a registered tax-deferred savings plan and the government's gift, these three combined elements of the plan will grow to nearly $78,000 by your child's 18th birthday assuming a 6% rate of return.

Of this $78,000, you will have contributed $36,000 ($2,000 x 18 years); the CESG would have added $7,200 ($400 x 18 years); and 6% investment growth would produce another $35,000 = $78,000. What a great start for your children!

With university costs (tuition/fees/books) today averaging about $4,300 annually (excluding room/board/travel), a four-year undergraduate degree will total over $19,000. In 18 years, assuming annual increases in costs (undergraduate tuition fees alone rose on average 79% in the last 10 years according to Statistics Canada), the same degree at home by 2022 will cost an inflated $42,000! Four years of higher education obtained away from home (a necessity for many Newfoundland and Labrador families) will cost an estimated $103,800. (Estimates provided by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), 2002. See also *The Price of Knowledge* at www.millenniumscholarships.ca).

Hint: If you receive the Canada Child Tax Benefit or GST credit rebates (for low and middle income families) and you don't need it all to meet immediate expenses, you could earmark this money (or a part of it) for your child's future education funding with a regular monthly contribution to an RESP. Other irregular windfalls such as RRSP tax refunds, family gifts, inheritance money, etc. also can be added to the pot. In either case, any contribution from any source attracts the 20% CESG "gift" from Ottawa up to a maximum $400 annually.

How much do I need to save?

Many parents wonder how much to save and how soon they should start. A reasonable reply would be to "start today with an amount you can afford". And starting early can ease the process by: 1) reducing the out- of- pocket costs today by increasing the duration of the contribution period; 2) allowing the compounding effects of tax-sheltered investment income to work its magic over a longer time; and 3) earning the largest amount available from the CESG.

Example: Rick and Dianne have a three-year old named Hayley. If they put $25 every payday into Hayley's RESP, that adds up to $650 annually. Their investment also attracts the $130 CESG grant (20% X $650). This continues for another 15 years until Hayley enters university at age 18. If this money grows at 6% annually, Hayley will have about $19,000 accumulated to help pay for her education. Of course, the amount will be higher if her grandparents or relatives also contribute or if her parents increase their contributions.

Example: David and Louise have newborn twins. They decided that an RESP was for them. Their proud grandparents have also expressed their desire to help. Here's their plan: They will open three family plan RESPs and contribute as follows: the parents contribute $100 a month from the Canada Child Tax Benefit; Louise's widowed mother puts $25 a month into a second plan and David's parents add $40 a month into a third plan. This will produce an anticipated $78,000 in 18 years. CESG contributions will cease at age 18 but three more annual RESP contributions are allowed including age 21. Any shortfall (see projected costs above) could be bridged by occasional extra contributions over the intervening 21 years, and later part-time work, summer jobs, possibly scholarships, etc. when the twins embark on higher education.

Benefits: The monies deposited to an RESP accumulate tax-free for up to 25 years. By regulation you have until your child's 25th birthday to use up the RESP funds. This can accommodate a child who decides not to start higher education immediately after high school. The RESP is also flexible in that the beneficiary can be changed to another sibling. As well, most post-secondary institutions – not just universities – in Canada or abroad qualify.

Who can set up the plan?

A parent, grandparent, relative, friend. The young person who will use the money is called the "BENEFICIARY"; the person who sets up and contributes to the plan is called the "SUBSCRIBER". The subscriber names the beneficiary of the RESP. If related by blood, it is called a "FAMILY" plan; otherwise it is called a "NON-FAMILY" plan. The "PROMOTER" is the organization that puts the money into a trust fund that invests the contributions in various securities. The annual payments made to beneficiaries later are called EAPs (Educational Assistance Payments).

Note:

- Unfortunately, unlike RRSPs there is no tax deduction or credit allowed for your contribution to an RESP, nor can interest on a loan made to invest in an RESP be claimed;
- Each child can avail of the RESP annual and lifetime contribution limits as well as the CESG payments;
- An individual child can have more than one RESP, but taken together, the dollar totals in contributions etc. must fall within the annual and lifetime maximums; and
- CESG room is granted to every child each year (if unused, it can be carried forward for future use).

There are a number of other rules that apply – e.g. for starting RESPs for older children age 14+, for carry forward CESG room, over-contributions, etc. A Financial Advisor can advise you on your individual queries.

(continued on page 30)

What happens to the RESP/CESG if your beneficiary does not attend post-secondary education?
You, as the subscriber, have various options:
• Change the beneficiary to another qualified beneficiary; or
• Withdraw the funds. Note that the capital can be returned to the subscriber without being taxed because it was made with after-tax dollars and there was no deduction for the contribution;
• Roll the principal or capital into your own or a spousal RRSP up to a $50,000 maximum-if you have unused RRSP contribution room;
• Withdraw the principal with no tax consequences. Accumulated investment earnings are subject to income tax and a 20% penalty tax;
• The CESG portion must be returned to the government.

How are the RESP/CESG funds invested?
The promoter – often an investment or insurance company, bank or credit union – will offer you an array of investment options. Your plan's success will depend on the particular investments you select. The time horizon is important here as the volatility of an investment's value is smoothed out over time. If you start investing when the child is very young, some plans initially select more aggressive investments that have a potential for higher returns. As time passes, your investment mix will be adjusted to reduce risk and protect the principal. In plain terms, this means more equity investments (higher risk/greater reward) in the early years and more bond/cash investments (lower risk/lesser reward) in later years.

Note: The foreign content limit of 30% for RRSPs does *not* apply to RESPs, so you are not restricted in your choice of Canadian or foreign investments.

How do I choose an RESP?
Plans vary between promoters. Here are eight questions to ask:
1. What are the setup, management, enrollment and administration fees *and* how can they be paid?
2. What happens if the beneficiary fails courses or is suspended from attending classes?
3. Can the beneficiary change programs or educational institutions?
4. What happens if I change my mind and want to cancel my RESP?
5. If I do not make my payments as agreed, what happens?
6. Can I change the beneficiary and if so, until what age?
7. What courses and institutions qualify for payments from my RESP?
8. Is there a fixed schedule of amounts and payout dates for payments for my beneficiary?

Where can I get more information?
There are several good websites that can provide more details. HRDC administers the CESG while CRA administers the RESP program. See www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/cesg and www.cra-arc.gc.ca. Other websites that contain youth-related financial items are www.canlearn.ca (on all aspects of higher education) and www.cfp-ca.org. Go to "Public" then to "Learning Center" then go to "personal finance management" and then to "educating youth" for many different sources of info.

Pat Hogan is a retired teacher/principal and life member of NLTA. He is now a licensed Financial Security Advisor with Facey Financial Planning & Consulting. Pat can be reached at 709-754-2143 or hogan@nl.rogers.com.

Patrick W. Hogan, B.A. B.Ed. M.Ed
Financial Security Advisor

• budgeting, debt management, tax planning
• mid-career & pre-retirement planning
• RESP's and estate planning
• individual insurance: life, disability, critical illness
• RRSP's, investments, retirement planning
• staff and group seminars arranged
• initial personal consultation at no cost

Facey Financial Planning & Consulting
20 Crosbie Place (behind NLTA Bldg.), St. John's
Phone: 754-2143; Email: hogan @nl.rogers.com

2004
PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR
REGISTRATION FORM

Name

Home Address

Postal Code

Home Telephone

Social Insurance Number

School Name

School Telephone

Please check which session you will be attending:

- ☐ **Oct. 7-8** – Hotel Gander, Gander
- ☐ **Oct. 14-15** – Holiday Inn, Stephenville
- ☐ **Oct. 21-22** – Holiday Inn, Corner Brook
- ☐ **Oct. 28-29** – Mt. Peyton, Grand Falls-Windsor
- ☐ **Nov. 4-5** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- ☐ **Nov. 22-23** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- ☐ **Dec. 2-3** – Holiday Inn, St. John's

Will your spouse be attending? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of spouse (if attending)

Earliest eligibility date for pension

Have you attended a previous pre-retirement seminar?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Note:
- Teachers within two years of retirement (on or before June 2007) are eligible to attend.
- All participants must pre-register.
- You will receive confirmation prior to seminar.
- Travel costs will be paid according to policy and only to the nearest seminar.
- Teachers are advised to bring a calculator.

Please submit registration form to:
Melanie Jaster
Benefits and Economic Services Division,
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582 (*toll free*)

FOR NLTA OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received	Confirmation Sent	Information Package Sent

Calendar

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA ATLANTIC CANADA CONFERENCE

October 15-16, 2004

Halifax, Nova Scotia. Keynote speaker: Dr. Mel Levine, America's top learning expert, best selling author and featured guest of *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. Registration is $275 and $100 for students (includes Friday lunch and nutritional breaks). For information contact Margaret MacInnis, Program Assistant, Learning Disabilities Association of Nova Scotia, 1800 Argyle Street, Suite 705, Halifax, NS, B3J 3N8, Tel: 902-423-2850, Fax: 902-423-2834, E-mail: mmacinnis.ldans@ns.sympatico.ca, Website: http://ldans.nsnet.org.

MCGILL UNIVERSITY DISTINGUISHED EDUCATORS SEMINARS

Fall 2004/Winter 2005

McGill University, Montreal, QC. For information contact Andrea Rudolph-Janosy, Program Assistant, Centre for Educational Leadership, D.I.S.E., Faculty of Education, 3700 McTavish, Montreal, QC, H3A 1Y2, Tel: 514-398-6961, Fax: 514-398-7436, andrea.rudolph@mcgill.ca, www.mcgill.ca/edu-integrated/cel.

MUSIC SPECIAL INTEREST COUNCIL CONFERENCE

October 21-23, 2004

Holiday Inn, St. John's. Contact Mary Dinn, President and Conference Chair, Tel: 709-745-1253 or e-mail: mdinn@roadrunner.nf.net.

COUNCIL OF PRIMARY AND ELEMENTARY TEACHERS CONFERENCE

October 28-29, 2004

Marystown. Keynote speakers include Dr. Mary Bigler and Miriam Trehearne. For information check out the link at the Virtual Teacher Centre website (www.virtualteachercentre.ca) or contact Theresa Jarvis at 709-279-1083 or Marlene Biggin at 709-279-4229 or mbiggin@bpsb.nf.ca.

LEARNING TODAY – TEACHING TOMORROW

November 12, 2004

Moncton, New Brunswick. Join K-12 educators from Atlantic Canada for one of the premier professional development opportunities of the year. Internationally renowned keynote speakers: Crystal Kuykendall; Murray Banks; David Sousa; Todd Whitaker; and Rex Murphy. Registration online (credit card only) at www.nbta.ca.

COUNSELLORS' AND PSYCHOLOGISTS' NATIONAL CONFERENCE AND AGM

May 24-27, 2005

Delta Hotel, St. John's. The Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors and Psychologists Association (NLCPA) in conjunction with the Canadian Counselling Association (CCA) will be hosting their National Conference and AGM. Conference Theme: "The Roots of Resilience / Les racines de la resilience". For more information visit www.ccacc2005.ca/ or contact Ruth George, Communications Officer with NLCPA at 709-643-2927 (w), 709-643-4332 (h), or RuthGeorge1@hotmail.com.

Dates to Remember

October 2004

- Oct 14-15 Pre-Retirement Seminar, Stephenville
- Oct 15-16 NLTA Executive Meeting
- Oct 21 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
- Oct 21-22 Pre-Retirement Seminar, Corner Brook
- Oct 28-29 Pre-Retirement Seminar, Grand Falls-Windsor
- Oct 29-30 School Rep Seminar, St. John's

November 2004

- Nov 4-5 Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
- Nov 7 **Deadline:** Project Overseas Applications
- Nov 15 **Department Deadline:** Teacher Exchange applications to Australia, Britain and USA.
- Nov 22-23 Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
- Nov 25 NLTA Executive Meeting
- Nov 26-27 Joint Council Meeting

December 2004

- Dec 2-3 Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
- Dec 8 **Deadline:** Nominations for offices of President and Vice-President must be postmarked by this date for inclusion in Convention issue of *The Bulletin*
- Dec 15 **Department Deadline:** Teacher Exchange applications to Ontario
- Dec 30 **Deadline:** Proposed changes, amendments or repeal of by-laws for BGM 2005 must be received at the NLTA office by this date
- Dec 31 **Deadline:** 2005 Christmas Card Contest entries

Important Notice for New Teachers

New Teacher Kits

If you **HAVE NOT** yet received your NLTA New Teacher Kit, please contact:

Susan Cardoulis
Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road
St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Tel: 726-3223, ext. 246 or 1-800-563-3599 (toll free)
scardoulis@nlta.nl.ca